



City of Duluth Communications Office

Mayor Emily Larson
411 West First Street • Duluth, Minnesota 55802 •
www.duluthmn.gov

For more information, please call 218-730-5309

DATE: 11/17/2023 12:00:00 AM

SUBJECT: City of Duluth receives score of 100 on 2023 Municipal Equality Index

BY: Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

City of Duluth receives score of 100 on 2023 Municipal Equality Index

[DULUTH, MN] The City of Duluth is proud to announce that it has earned a perfect score of 100 from the annual Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index (MEI).

The MEI examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) people who live and work in cities across the country. Cities are rated based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement, and the city leadership's public positions on equality.

The MEI rates 506 cities annually. The cities that participate include:

- The country's 200 largest cities
- The five largest cities in each state
- The cities in each state's where the two largest public universities are located.

"We are thrilled to see City of Duluth's score continue to increase because of the work the City of Duluth and the Duluth Human Rights Commission do every day to make our community a better place for those in the LGBTQ+ community to live, work, and play," said Human Rights Officer Carl Crawford.

Laura Laaksonen, City of Duluth's Human Rights Assistant, works year-round with the Human Rights Campaign, ensuring that the office's and commission's work align with the improvement of outcomes that lead to this score. "Every single day we work hard here at the City to make sure that our employees and residents are heard, included, and advocated for," said Laaksonen. "This work is important and is a big part of the

community values we continue to invest in."

This is the twelfth year that the Human Rights Campaign has evaluated how cities support the LGBTQ+ people living in communities across the country. Out of the cities that participated, only 25 percent received a score of 100, with the average score being 71. Eight municipalities in the state of Minnesota were measured, with Duluth and Saint Paul being the only two to receive a score of 100.

"I am filled with pride and joy to receive this news of Duluth's score of 100 on this year's MEI," Mayor Emily Larson said.

"People need to feel seen, heard, and valued by their municipality. We have always known this, and this is why we put in the work of intentional inclusivity every day, and in every way. We've seen our score climb over the past few years, and receiving a perfect score doesn't mean we take our feet off the gas. Our community deserves this. Our staff deserve this. And I'm grateful to the commissioners and staff who do this meaningful work every day to ensure our staff and residents feel like they belong."

Duluth joined the MEI Index in 2015. The first score that the City received was 71 out of 100. The City scored 90 on the MEI in 2022. This year is the first 100 score it has received. For more information on the annual MEI, please visit www.HRC.org/MEI.

###